

Spring 2007 MRI Released

By Rick Jones, DJG ADviser

This annual rite of Spring, the unleashing of the latest MRI audience survey occurred on Wednesday May 23. The Spring study was not quite as kind as the Fall '06 study in which 50% of titles saw an increase in Audience over the Spring of 2006. Also in that study, 55% of titles saw an increase from Fall '05 to Fall '06.

In Spring 2007, 97 of the 239 common titles saw increases ... a 40.1% level. That is still pretty good considering how many magazines have taken rate base declines in the last few years – some of them dramatically.

Notable for those of us at WRSS is that the percent of magazines read in public places topped the 25% level for the first time. This is continued confirmation that strategic placement of magazines in waiting rooms delivers engaged readers.

Who's New? Who's Gone

Every year brings some new titles to measurement, while we say goodbye to a few, some for good.

There is just one new magazine to this survey – Teen Vogue – who produced over 3 million Adult 18+ readers (MRI's universe) and an impressive adult Reader-Per-Copy of 3.13 for a title targeted primarily at teens.

There were five new group designations: Bonnier Outdoor Group, North American Media Men, North American Media Women, Pace Air Group (3), Parenting Group.

No longer measured are many familiar names: Child, FHM, Games for Windows, Life, Nick Jr., Official US PlayStation, Premiere, Sports Weekly, Time4 Marine Group, Time4 Media.

Biggest Gainers

The top ten gainers from Spring to Spring were:

<u>Title</u>	<u>% Gain</u>
National Geographic Adventure	+ 47.0
Popular Photography & Imaging	+ 30.4
In Touch Weekly	+ 29.0
GamePro	+ 26.8
Sport Truck	+ 25.2
Continental	+ 21.7
Macworld	+ 20.7
American Photo	+ 20.6
Game Informer	+ 19.9
Men's Fitness	+ 18.9

Looks like there is resurgence in photography interest! Also, Tennis heats up (+17.6%). Weight Watchers keeps up its steady climb (+17.5%) as does Real Simple (+14.4). A notable gainer is AARP, up over 1.5 million readers (+10.7%).

Biggest Decliners

Changes in the methodology for daily newspapers produced some large declines. The changes largely have due to do with how to count web readership. The top ten:

<u>Title</u>	<u>% Loss</u>
New York Times	- 27.2
Jane	- 22.6
Delta's SKY	- 20.8
W	- 20.4
American Way	- 19.3
Wall St. Journal	- 17.9
Bicycling	- 17.7
Spin	- 16.9
USA Today	- 16.8
U.S. News & World Report	- 18.9

Key Demo's

There are ten measured publications with median household incomes that exceed \$100,000. Dow Jones occupies spots number one and two with The Wall St. Journal and Barron's. Newspapers may have declining circulations but they are maintaining their affluence as both the New York Times and Washington Post make the Elite Ten:

Ten highest HHI (alpha order)

Barron's	\$127,966
Conde Nast Traveler	\$103,072
Delta's Sky Magazine	\$105,421
Hemisphere's (United)	\$116,884
NWA World Traveler	\$103,560
New York Times	\$102,618
The Economist	\$103,463
Wall Street Journal	\$131,828
Washington Post	\$100,375
Wine Spectator	\$100,059

Courtesy of our friends at AARP, they turned up the fact that a dozen publications have joined The Fifty Plus Club with their median ages topping 50 in the Spring 2007 study. All were just under 50 in the Fall 2006 study. Here are those with "living healthier, living longer Boomers" at their core and now top 50 in age. A diverse list:

Ten Newcomers to 50+ Club (alpha order)

Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel	50.0
Coastal Living	50.4
Conde Nast Traveler	50.9
Consumer Reports	50.2
Family Handyman	50.8
House & Garden	50.9
Sierra	50.4
Southern Living	50.3
Texas Monthly	50.1
The New Yorker	51.0
Travel and Leisure	51.1
U.S. News & World Report	50.3

In case you were wondering, there were already 25 reported publications with a median age of fifty: AARP, American Legion, American Rifleman, Arthritis Today, Atlantic Monthly, Audubon, Catholic Digest, Country Home, Diabetes Forecast, Family Circle, Gardening How-To, Good Housekeeping, Guideposts, House Beautiful, Kiplinger's Personal Finance, Ladies' Home Journal, Midwest Living, Prevention, Reader's Digest, Saturday Evening Post, Smithsonian, Sunset, VFW Magazine, Workbench and Yankee.

For those keeping track, AARP has the highest median age at 62.0 and CosmoGirl is the youngest at 23.3 – neither one a surprise. Among other members of the 20's Club are three Dennis' titles (Blender, Maxim and Stuff), Vibe, Seventeen, Teen Vogue and a host of gaming books.

Most Read

Once again, the newspaper distributed magazines have the highest audiences as projected by their carrier newspaper. Parade is at 70.7 million and USA Weekend at 48.5 million.

Among the publications measured directly by MRI, here's your top ten:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Aud (000)</u>
People	42,375
Better Homes & Gardens	38,037
Reader's Digest	36,880
AARP The Magazine	31,492
National Geographic	31,284
Good Housekeeping	25,565
Woman's Day	21,709
Time	21,645
Family Circle	21,382
Sports Illustrated	20,037

Interestingly, the least read magazine reported by MRI is Barron's with 932,000 readers on a circulation of 314,000.

Public Place Tops 25%

In the past 10 years more and more publishers have been using waiting room distribution as a strategic way to gain trial, improve audience and gain new subscribers. The system is working, as the percentage of MRI-measured magazines has grown from just 15% to over one in four (25.1%). And, this distribution is producing younger readers – a strong audience development tool to keep titles healthy for the long run.

The role of PP readership varies dramatically by category. Among the highest categories: Inflight (of course!), Parenthood, Shelter, Beauty, Entertainment and Personality, and a host of enthusiast behaviors from golf to bicycling to outdoors.

Among lower readership categories are: Laddie books (quite surprisingly), gaming, tabloids, epicurean, personal finance and home improvement.

If you'd like a custom look at your magazine or category, feel free to contact your WRSS representative who will share more with you.